

Domestic Violence Funding Discussion Survey Results - 9/24/2012

1. In your opinion, what are the impacts, intended or unintended, of using U.S. Census data to determine county funding allocations? What recommendations would you make for change?
<p>I think census is good in terms of trends of population. I think it is an objective tool and honestly that seems very important. The number of dollars that goes out to DV statewide is significant, and sadly we will never fully meet the need. So, an objective perspective helps maintain equity and stability. The challenge is that for low population areas it can reduce their allocation. That said, the only other idea would be to look at percentage of increase, decrease ongoing instead actual numbers. That would respond to trends. I don't think that is the best idea, but it is AN idea. The problem with it is that there are no more dollars so the reality is it will be shifting dollars and we will be right back to where we are. Also, no program can effectively function with a funding process that changes all the time, there is no chance for stability so the whole state will be in flux and will be at risk for poor sustainability. So I think while change is hard, we need to shift to a new normal in terms of funding. The sad truth is, there is no solution where everyone is happy.</p>
<p>No matter what data is used for population statistics, rural areas cannot compete with urban areas. The most recent .05 percent rural allocation was not even realistic. No matter where the service providers are located, the operating overhead will be the same as far as personnel, benefits and so forth. Furthermore, cost of living and cost of healthcare and travel are also higher in rural locations than urban locations. This is factual. Solely basing population statistics is an unfair disadvantage for rural service providers. There is no easy recommendation if the mindset is to use population for service needs. All data that is being reported to DES quarterly annually may show a better statistic of the agency's actual services to their service region. In rural areas, one service provider could serve an area that is either a ten mile-radius or a 100 mile-radius of their location.</p>
<p>Census data allows for a fair allocation of funds across the State.</p>
<p>The unintended consequence is obvious in that it has resulted in a loss of services in some places. We cannot ignore the historical significance of the previous funding.</p>
<p>I like the fact that census data was used.</p>
<p>Census data is only as good as the person completing the survey. Low income rural populations tend to be less well educated---and statistically those individuals will not complete a survey. Rural counties also serve as a base for those who are not legally here, and they too will not fill out the form for fear of repercussions.</p>
<p>It appears that many programs have been cut in areas where the majority of victims are seeking services. Programs with long history are being cut based on population trends rather than lack of service need.</p>
<p>Unfortunately, more people does not necessarily equate to more domestic violence. Therefore, some areas that have a larger problem of domestic violence are losing funding to provide shelter. Crime statistics to population ratio could be used, as well as number of organizations serving the areas could be used.</p>

2. An additional weighting factor of 1.5 was applied to all counties classified as rural. If any additional weight should be applied to rural counties, what factors should be considered?
<p>I think that is an ok process. This is where I need to share more when we talk. The reality is that it is just not feasible to fund shelter in rural communities, they cannot sustain the cost. I know when we have a ten person shelter it costs us two times as much to run as our other shelters. It is really not sustainable with fewer than 30 beds. So, I would rather see the funding go to helping rural providers link with the closest metro provider and the metro provider having some responsibility to help meet the needs. Then you maximize the services, reduce overhead... and I would do your weight based on the creativity of partnering to maximize these things versus funding in small pieces. That honestly is just plugging a hole. I am sorry if that is too direct, but I do believe it is truth.</p>

How many providers are within a service area? Duplication of services by providers within close proximity. Travel distances between service provider and county justice court or providers staff ratio to clients served.
We believe there should not be an additional weight factor for rural counties other than the 1.5.
I believe that the factor is appropriate.
If additional weight were considered you would need to think about things like what other resources the program has for funding including business in the area. But I think just a rural factor on its own is fine.
Some rural counties have a large population base within a 30 minute radius. This allows what may be a "rural" community to at least have access to better services in a closer proximity. Some rural communities have a great transit system. Both of these factors should also be taken into effect when calculating weighting. And those rural areas with significant Native American populations should also be additionally weighted. Service providers require additional time to build credibility within the Native population.
I agree that rural counties should get the factor of 1.5. It is most difficult in the rural counties to find resources to meet the needs of victims.
Number of organizations serving the areas and crime statistics per population ratio.

3. In your opinion, what are the impacts, intended or unintended, of applying residential utilization data to determine funding allocations within the counties? If utilization rates were not used, what would you recommend?
I think utilization is excellent. If there are beds unused, or space unused we need to shift the funds to places that are full... programs may not like that but if we are here for the people in need - with that at the center of the discussion - I think this is the right solution.
Utilization rates are an appropriate tool, however a better explanation of what goes into the rate such as staff, food, electricity, insurance, etc. This would allow the rate to be understood and equitable. Additionally up front knowledge that this data is being used. Finally programs should have the opportunity to showcase their programming in a narrative form.
I believe that utilization data is too volatile and subject to many reasons for its variance. I think that using capacity makes more sense. Shelter and services should be available when needed. That need will vary.
It could be updated yearly (if it isn't) but other than that it seems like a good formula.
Utilization was not required in previous funding and programs were told that DES was purchasing availability. Utilization should not be a factor as no program can foresee trends in this. It would be better to maintain program stability to keep programs in line with their funding history. Utilization rates make it necessary to keep people in the beds, rather than encourage independence in order to secure funding.
Number of organizations serving the areas and crime statistics per population ratio.

4. What are the guiding principles to be considered in discussion concerning DV funding?
Thinking creatively and not trying to fill our funding needs to continue to do things as we always have. I can't help but think about hospitals. Remember when women had babies and stayed for a week? I remember when it moved to a couple days. Everyone was so angry and there was significant discontent. AND, the truth is that hospitals had to do that in order to afford to stay open and so hard decisions are needed... instead we need to look for innovative solutions and start to work more together instead of protecting turf. I know that is really strong, and I know I have been there - if we are all honest - in part that is our roles as ED's, and if there is any way to step back and look at the bigger picture of being here for people in need the turf issues can soften and collectively we actually all have more to offer.
The services being provided to the DV client. DV client receiving the service they need is primary to the need for funds.

Safety needs to be the primary principle in discussing DV funding. Additionally who is providing the most quality services for victims beyond food and shelter.
I think that historical funding must be considered. Programs that have been in the community for a long time and have taken risks should continue to be supported. This is an investment in partnership. It should also be noted that DES does not pay for all of the service. Many organizations offer far more services than are contracted. That should mean something. The comprehensive nature and availability of services in a community is important. We should promote availability in all regions. Longevity should count.
All shelters need funding. Shelters in rural areas have less resources than those in metro areas.
Current crime data statistics. Type of support provided to the victim, and success rates of programs.
There should be no harm to existing programs to add new programs. More notice should be given to programs in order to implement changes prior to contract begin dates.
The sad part is, no matter how you try to be fair someone will feel slighted. This is a difficult topic to discuss.

5. What other factors or questions would you like to have considered?
Whether the agencies who receive funding are effective in the services they offer to the DV victim. Meaning, does data the agency submit to DES show customer satisfaction and its impact in the agency's overall purpose in providing services to DV victims.
Who is providing the most well rounded services to include such populations as male victims and servicing the LBGTQ population.
Did programs, not previously funded for DV services, get awarded funds? What is the benefit to changing the entire system and then spreading the resources even thinner when existing programs have worked to build infrastructure for years. Why were programs not told until three days before the contract start date of their awards, when many programs experienced significant changes. It is impossible to plan for these and continue to serve individuals at the same time.
Number of organizations serving the areas and crime statistics per population ratio.

6. What role would you like to play in on-going work on this topic?
Participate in a work group. – 6 responded they wanted to be involved.
Be kept informed and have opportunity to provide input. – 1 responded they wanted to be informed